

Chapter 10

Reporting To Schools and Districts

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) notifies schools and districts of their Commonwealth Accountability Testing System performance results on September 15th of each year. This distribution includes detailed descriptions of student level and content area scores that lead to a school's and district's performance judgment. At the end of a four-year cycle, KDE notifies each school and district of their single performance judgment.

Midpoint results for the fourth accountability cycle, a four-year period beginning with the school year 1996-97 and ending at the conclusion of the 1999-2000 school year, were released to schools and districts on September 15, 1999.

District reports were issued at the same time as school reports, and differ from school reports only in terms of being based on all students in the district rather than all students in a school. Thus, district scores at a given accountability grade will not necessarily be equal to the weighted sum of the district's school's scores at that accountability grade. The inclusion of scores (and/or non-cognitive indicator results) from students who attend classes in a special learning environment, or who were not assigned to a reporting school, could alter district results.

School, district, and state-level results were released to schools, districts and media on September 29, 1999. These results were embargoed until December 15, 1999. The embargo allowed schools and districts to review their results and communicate these results to faculty and staff prior to their release to the general public. Concurrently, individual student results were also provided to schools, both in a summary format and on a report intended for distribution to the parents/guardians of each student who took an assessment. Test result materials sent to schools and districts included:

- Individual Student Reports
- A Student Listing
- Item Level Report (Open-response and Multiple-choice items)
- Kentucky Performance Report
- Core Content Report

The remainder of this chapter describes in detail the final Cycle 4 Commonwealth Accountability Testing System reports issued following the 1998-99 school year.

Focus Groups

To maximize the utility of any reports sent to either schools or parents, various groups were asked to participate in numerous focus meetings. These meetings included parents, teachers, principals, public officials, and concerned citizens from across the state. Typically, each of these meetings included 10 to 25 people from one or more of the following groups: Louisville PTA, Cabinet for Human Resource (CHR) parent group, KIRIS Elementary School Principals Advisory Committee, KIRIS Middle School Principals Advisory Committee, KIRIS High School Principals Advisory Committee, District Assessment Coordinators (DAC), and the Prichard Committee. At each of these meetings, the latest enhanced version of various reports were presented for discussion. Ideas gathered from each meeting would be presented to the next focus group for their recommendations. By completion of all the focus groups, numerous additions and refinements were incorporated into each report sent to schools and parents.

Individual Student Reports

Two copies of each student's Individual Student Report (Appendix 10-1) were sent to schools. One report was forwarded to students' parents/guardians while the other report is for school use. These reports presented each student's principal performance level (Novice, Apprentice, Proficient, or Distinguished) in as many as three subject areas (reading, mathematics, science, social studies, and writing portfolio) depending on the grade tested. Moreover, the individual student report also provided the student with information about their performance not found in any other report presented to schools. The principal performance levels of Novice and Apprentice were further divided into Low (Novice Non-performance replaces the low category for this level), Middle, and High categories. This additional parsing of both the Novice and Apprentice performance levels provides the student with a more precise idea of where his/her achievement was in relation to the next principal performance level.

The Individual Student Reports depicted the percentage of Kentucky students scoring in each of these performance levels for each of the subject areas at the student's grade. Each student's Kentucky percentile rank was given in four subject areas of reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. Numeric, as well as a visual representation of error bands was provided for the percentile rank associated with each subject area.

Schools employed a variety of methods to transmit individual student data to the students' parents/guardians. Some schools simply sent the Individual Student Report to parents or guardians, some enclosed letters explaining results, while others asked parents/guardians to attend conferences, at which time results were explained in detail.

Student Listing

The Student Listing (Appendix 10-2) contained information about all students tested or accountable to a particular school by grade level. There are several student accountability types reported on the student listing. These student accountability situations include:

- Students tested and accountable at this school
- Students tested but accountable at another school
- Students tested at another school but accountable to this school
- Students tested with an Alternate Portfolio
- Students tested but exempt from accountability
- Students not tested but exempt from accountability

This listing reports each student name and their “lithocode” identification number. Along with student identification, each student’s performance level and Kentucky achievement percentile in each of four open response content areas tested (reading, mathematics, science, and social studies) for the assessment grade was presented. If a writing portfolio was completed the performance level and instructional analysis was also reported.

Schools used the above information to not only review individual student achievement but also to make sure there was an accurate accounting of students accountable to the school. Scores obtained by students who were exempt from testing, according to Department of Education policy, are not aggregated into the school’s total accountability score. However, these students are presented in student listing, so the school may identify any inconsistency with their records. Scores obtained by students in other accountability situations (noted above) are also presented, so the school will be able to know where each accountable student was tested and what scores were obtained to compute the school’s index. Verification at the student level is an important check that each school performs.

Item Level Report

Much like the Student Listing, the Item Level Report (Appendix 10-3) gives each student’s name and lithocode identification number. However, unlike the Student Listing report the item level report provides detailed information about each student’s response to each multiple-choice and open-response question and the on-demand writing prompt. Each student’s answers to open-response questions were evaluated on a five point, 0-4 scale. Below, is the non-grade or item specific scoring guide, which is used as a framework for grade and item specific scoring.

This scoring framework is defined as follows:

Blank The score of “blank” indicates a non-response. The student made no attempt to answer the question; the answer space was blank.

0 The score point of “0” indicates that a student’s answer demonstrated one of two properties. It can mean the student’s answer was totally incorrect, or it can mean the student’s answer was off-topic, i.e., had nothing to do with the question, including irrelevant remarks.

1 The score point of “1” indicates that a student’s answer demonstrated a minimal understanding of the question. The student’s response addressed the question but showed little knowledge about the topic. The student did not develop a complete answer, and answered only a small portion of the question.

2 The score point of “2” indicates that a student’s answer demonstrated understanding of some of the important components of the question. This understanding was clearly communicated. However, the student’s response also demonstrated some gaps in the student’s conceptual understanding of the question.

3 The score point of “3” indicates that a student’s answer demonstrated an understanding of most of the important components of the question. This understanding was clearly communicated. Moreover, the student’s response also demonstrated an understanding of the major concepts even though some minor ideas or details were either overlooked or misunderstood.

4 The score point of “4” indicates that a student’s answer demonstrated understanding of all of the important components of the question. This understanding was clearly communicated. The student demonstrated in-depth understanding of the relevant concepts and/or processes. Where appropriate, the student chose the more efficient and/or sophisticated process. Where appropriate, the student offered insightful interpretations or extensions (generalizations, applications, analogies).

Multiple-choice responses are displayed as a “+” for a correct answer, a “-“ for an incorrect answer, or a “0” for a blank answer.

The student’s performance level for reading, math, science, social studies and on-demand writing are also indicated. To aid the school’s assessment of student performance, the school, district, and state means are provided for each common test item.

Kentucky Performance Reports

The Kentucky Performance Report (Appendix 10-4) aggregates student level information into either the school or district level. The report contains the following information:

- Introduction
- Academic Trend Data
- Reading Results
- Mathematics Results
- Science Results
- Social Studies Results
- Writing Portfolio
- On-Demand Writing
- Arts & Humanities and PL/VS
- Data Disaggregation
- Summary Data
- Student Questionnaire Results

INTRODUCTION. The Kentucky Performance Report introduction provides the reader with an overview of the contents of the report. It furnishes the background for the various parts of the report with regard to grade specific content areas. The introduction reviews the expectations that all “schools shall expect a high level of achievement of all students.” It also describes the exemptions to that standard in the case of a.) Foreign exchange students, b.) Medical exemptions, and c.) Limited-English speakers.

ACADEMIC TREND DATA. The Academic Trend Data reports the 1998-99 academic index results for each content area assessed. The students scores have been aggregated by school (or by district for the district report) to produce this index.

READING RESULTS. The on-demand performance results for the content area of reading are reported in this section. The Reading Trend Data page provides the number and percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished students for the school or district. Within the reading content area, defined by an Academic Expectation, are skills and strategies that students will need to use as they work on the reading test. Students’ ability to make sense of a wide variety of materials including informational texts, literary texts, persuasive texts, and practical reading materials are important skills. The mean item scores for all items classified in these four subdomains of reading are reported on the reading subscore page. Also included on this page are the results of specific reading questions asked on the student questionnaire.

MATHEMATICS RESULTS. The on-demand performance results for the content area of mathematics are reported in this section. The Math Trend Data page provides the number and percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished students for the school or district. Within the mathematics content area, defined by academic expectations, are a common

core of important mathematics skills that students will need to use as they work on the mathematics. There are four identified reporting subdomains, which are: Number/Computation, Geometry/ Measurement, Probability/Statistics, and Algebraic Ideas. For the 1998-99 school year, the school's/district's number and percentage of students at the Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished levels are reported. As with reading, the mean item scores for all items classified in these four subdomains are reported on the math subscore page. Also included on this page is the results of specific math questions asked on the student questionnaire.

SCIENCE RESULTS. The on-demand performance results for the content area of science are reported in this section. The Science Trend Data page provides the number and percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished students for the school or district. Within the science content area, defined by academic expectations, are a common set of themes that permeate the sciences, be it life sciences, earth and space sciences, or the physical sciences. There are four identified reporting subdomains, they are: life sciences, earth and space sciences, physical sciences and inquiry. For the 1998-99 school year, the school's/district's number and percentage of students at the Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished levels are reported. As with the other content areas, the mean item scores for all items classified in these four subdomains are reported on the science subscore page. Also included on this page is the results of specific science questions asked on the student questionnaire.

SOCIAL STUDIES RESULTS. The on-demand performance results for the content area of social studies are reported in this section. The Social Studies Trend Data page provides the number and percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished students for the school or district. The social studies content area, defined by academic expectations, is concentrated in the following five reporting subdomains, they are: government and civics, culture and society, economics, geography, and history. For the 1998-99 school year, the school's/district's number and percentage of students at the Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished levels are reported. As with the other content areas, the mean item scores for all items classified in these five subdomains are reported on the social studies subscore page. Also included on this page is the results of specific social studies questions asked on the student questionnaire.

WRITING PORTFOLIO. The writing portfolio performance results reported in this section. This page displays the number and percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished portfolios for the school or district. Many of goals of the writing content area, defined by an Academic Expectation, can be demonstrated using writing portfolio assessment. The writing portfolio scoring guide, used in the holistic scoring of the writing portfolio, also provides teachers with an instructional analysis useful in annotating student portfolios to indicate instructional strengths. The following areas are used to indicate instructional strengths:

- 1.) Establishing focused authentic purpose,
- 2.) Writing for authentic audiences, situations,
- 3.) Employing a suitable voice and/or tone,
- 4.) Developing ideas relevant to the purpose,
- 5.) Supporting ideas with elaborated, relevant details,
- 6.) Organizing ideas logically,

- 7.) Using effective transitions,
- 8.) Constructing effective and/or correct sentences,
- 9.) Using language effectively and/or correctly,
- 10.) Editing for correctness.

For the 1998-99 school year, the number and percentage of portfolios showing instructional strengths are tabulated for the school/district. Schools can examine their instructional strengths using this table. This review can assist schools in improving writing and learning.

ON-DEMAND WRITING. Similar to the writing portfolio, the on-demand writing performance results are reported in this section. This page displays the number and percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished students for the school or district. The goals of the on-demand writing test are the same as the writing portfolio assessment. Using the same scoring guide and holistic scoring approach as the writing portfolio, teachers are provided with the same instructional analysis of student performance to indicate instructional strengths. The following areas are used to indicate instructional strengths:

- 1.) Establishing focused authentic purpose,
- 2.) Writing for authentic audiences, situations,
- 3.) Employing a suitable voice and/or tone,
- 4.) Developing ideas relevant to the purpose,
- 5.) Supporting ideas with elaborated, relevant details,
- 6.) Organizing ideas logically,
- 7.) Using effective transitions,
- 8.) Constructing effective and/or correct sentences,
- 9.) Using language effectively and/or correctly,
- 10.) Editing for correctness.

For the 1998-99 school year, the number and percentage of students showing instructional strengths are tabulated for the school/district. Schools can examine their instructional strengths using this table. This review can assist schools in improving writing and learning.

ARTS & HUMANITIES AND PL/VS. The on-demand performance results for the content areas of arts & humanities and PL/VS are reported in this section. These pages provide the number and percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished students for the school or district in each content area.

DATA DISAGGREGATION. The data disaggregation results report the number and percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished responses across all content areas for each grade by the following subgroups:

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Title 1
- Migrant Programs
- Extended School Services
- Gifted and Talented Programs
- Students with Disabilities (with and without accommodations)

The data desegregation process only considers data scanned from student answer documents. To protect anonymity of respondents, no data are reported if a category includes fewer than 10 students. The analyses also include students who are participating in alternate portfolios.

Also included in this disaggregation, is the number and percentage of students in each of these categories that participated in the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System at the district and state level. District and state academic indices for each content area are also provided to the schools. Lastly, data on the number of medical, limited English proficient, and other exemptions are provided at the school, district, and state levels.

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS. All students in the accountability system were administered a questionnaire at the end of open-response testing. Questions administered varied slightly from grade to grade. Both the number and percentage of student responses to each question were reported. The questions included length of Kentucky residency and current school attendance, after school activities to include the amount of homework, nonacademic reading, and television, the amount of school course coverage in relation to test coverage, the amount of participation in various activities including: groups, projects, information retrieval, oral reports, use of calculator, free choice reading, mathematics problem solving, and use of mathematics manipulatives. Additional questions include the amount of useful teacher feedback given on homework, the amount and concordance of part-time work with career goals, absenteeism in a given month, vocational plans, the number of courses by subject area that will be completed at high school graduation, current academic performance in school, and current English and mathematics academic level course enrollment. Questions were tailored for each grade level.

Accountability Report

The purpose of the Accountability portion of the report (Appendix 10-5) is to provide a school or district a single three-page report that has all their Commonwealth Accountability Testing System accountability information. The report provides the accountability index scores by which schools were evaluated. Using these scores a school's/district's performance judgment will be made.

The first two pages of the accountability report captures some of the same elements found in the earlier pages of the Kentucky Performance Report. The percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished at the school or district level is reported by content area. The content areas reported are reading, mathematics, science, social studies, arts & humanities, practical living and vocational studies, and writing portfolio. If a content area is represented by various types of testing, (i.e. open-response, and portfolio) these values and their weighted totals are also given.

The third page of the accountability report provides schools/districts with their academic, noncognitive, and accountability indices. There is an academic index for each content area. A content area specific academic index is computed by multiplying the percentage Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished in that content area by 0, 40, 100 and 140, respectively and summing the products. The weighted academic indices are combined with a weighted noncognitive index to form the accountability index. The mathematics, reading, science, social studies, and writing indices are weighted 14% each, Arts and Humanities, and Practical Living and Vocational Studies are weighted 7% each, and the noncognitive index is weighted 16%. For schools also interested in reporting only the academic portion of the accountability index, the total academic index is also provided. This index uses only content area weights used with the accountability index to compute the academic index; no noncognitive information is included. However, since the combined cognitive weights only equal 84% the sum of the products must be divided by .84 to place the resulting total academic index on the same metric as the accountability index.

To provide a school/district with a performance judgment (Reward, Successful, Successful Year 2, Improving, Improving Category 2, Decline, or Crisis) the school's/district's Baseline Index, Improvement Goal, and Combined Growth Index must be computed. The accountability report provides all of these indices. The Baseline index, which is the weighted average of the accountability indices for the first two years of the accountability cycle, is used to calculate the amount of growth required of the school/district during the cycle. This growth is added to the baseline to provide the Improvement Goal. The average Accountability Growth Index, which is the weighted average of the accountability indices for the last two years of the accountability cycle, is then compared to the Improvement Goal to produce a performance judgment. Each accountability report has a tailored message indicating the school's/district's performance judgment. These reports are further described in the *Interpretive Guide*, published in September 1999, which accompanied the reports.